



Department of Place

Education Client Services
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Date: 7 September 2018

Parents/Carers
Children Attending Low Ash Primary School

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Nursery Class – Low Ash Primary School

The School and Governing Body of Low Ash Primary School have requested that the Council consults on the possible closure of their nursery class from September 2019. The age range of the school would, if the nursery closed change from 3 to 11 to 4 to 11.

The reason for this is the school are concerned that over the last few years their nursery class has not filled, the amount of funding they subsequently received therefore will be insufficient to enable them to staff and resource the nursery correctly.

The school has carried out a promotional drive in the last few months to advertise and generate more interest to try and fill their nursery.

- A large banner was placed outside the school near the crossing.
- Posters were placed on parents' boards around the school and in a variety of locations including Health Centres, local shops and businesses, the library and in Morrisons.
- The monthly newsletter and news brochure to parents also included information.

During the summer term this year the nursery class had only 42 children, 16 of these took advantage of the 30 hour offer of full time provision.

The school have surveyed two cohorts of parents whose children are attending/will be attending Low Ash but chose not to send their children to the nursery. The main reasons given were either that their child was already settled in another nursery setting, or that additional hours (typically 8am to 6pm) or days were needed.

Nursery to reception transition:

2018/19 - There were 37 eligible children in the nursery who applied for reception places in September 2018. 30 of these children (81%) have been allocated to Low Ash, 4 made first preferences for other schools, 3 applied for Low Ash but were not allocated using admission criteria, one of these applications was received after the allocations were made by which time the full 60 had been allocated.

2017/18 - There were 44 eligible children in 2017, 33 (75%) of whom were allocated places

at Low Ash. The remainder either made preferences for other schools (6) or were not allocated due to the admissions criteria, mainly distance to the school.

2016/17 – There were 55 eligible children in 2016, 37 (67%) of whom were allocated places at Low Ash. The remainder either made preferences for other schools (3) or were not allocated due to the admissions criteria, mainly distance to the school.

2015/16 - There were 57 eligible children in 2015, 45 (79%) of whom were allocated places at Low Ash. The remainder either made preferences for other schools (3) or were not allocated due to the admissions criteria, mainly distance to the school.

Future demand for places:

59 children are expected to join the nursery class in September 2018/19.

The school has 35 children on their waiting list (equivalent to 48 out of 60 places as some are full time, 30 hours places) who wish to start in the nursery in September 2019. Other nurseries in the area do currently have sufficient capacity to accommodate all these children should the nursery be closed.

The school admits 60 into each year group, reception to year 6, although as agreed by the Executive Committee of the Council, as from September 2019 it will admit 90 into reception, then incrementally over a 7 year period until all year groups can admit 90.

The expansion and increase in published admission numbers is due to the growing demand for places in this and the surrounding area mainly due to a number of significant housing developments that have been approved. Unfortunately we are unable at this stage to say when these homes would be completed and occupied, and by whom, nor whether there will be an increase in the demand for nursery places.

This letter is therefore to consult with you on a number of possible options affecting the nursery class at Low Ash Primary School:

- Full closure of the nursery class.
- Reduce the number of children attending from a 30 place nursery with a staffing ratio equivalent of 3, to a 26 place nursery with 2 members of staff.
- Change the opening hours of the nursery to morning or afternoons only.
- Change the nursery to only open for 2 or 3 days a week.
- Retain the nursery as it is.

Proposals

1. Closure of the nursery class from July 2019.

- This would affect the 35 children currently on the waiting list, although advice on alternative provision could be given by the school or Council.
- Making the decision to close the nursery in no way affects any application you might want to make for a reception place at Low Ash for September 2020, as a child attending a school nursery would not have a guaranteed place into the reception class due to the admissions criteria of the Council.
- Future demand for nursery class places from families moving into new and planned homes would need to be met elsewhere.
- Current nursery staff would be employed elsewhere within the school particularly as the school is expanding which would avoid any potential redundancies.
- Alternative use of this space would need to be made and in the interim whilst expansion construction works are being undertaken this space could be used for the additional statutory aged children. i.e. the new additional reception class.

- the age range of the school would be changed from 3 to 11 year olds to 4 to 11 year olds.
2. Reduce the nursery to a 26 place nursery.
 - This would enable the school to employ 2 rather than 3 members of staff in the nursery class. The 'spare' member of staff could be employed elsewhere in the school particularly as it increases its' published admission number from 60 to 90 starting from September 2019. This may help the school financially.
 - Up to a maximum of 52 part-time children could be catered for instead of the current 60.
 - The school would be able to admit 26 nursery children at any one time, 26 am and 26 pm those taking up the 30 hour offer would take up both a morning and an afternoon place, reducing the number of different children attending.
 - This is less likely to cause disruption for parents and children.
 3. Change the opening hours of the nursery to morning or afternoons only.
 - This would affect children who currently have 30 hours per week provision, they would either need to revert to 15 hours per week, find the additional 15 hours elsewhere or move nursery to a provider that can offer 30 hours.
 - Nursery class staff would need to work elsewhere within the school during the morning or afternoon. Some staffing restructuring would be required.
 - Parents could be affected if any working patterns or childcare arrangements did not fit in with either the morning or the afternoon sessions dependant on when the nursery was open.
 - Utility costs would remain the same but alternative part-time use of the space could be made, e.g. Community use, although resources and furniture would need to either remain or be removed and then returned to accommodate this
 4. Change the nursery to open only 2 or 3 days a week.
 - This would affect children who currently have 30 hours per week provision, they would either need to revert to 15 hours per week, find the additional 15 hours elsewhere or move nursery to a provider that can offer 30 hours.
 - Nursery class staff would need to work elsewhere within the school during the rest of the week. Some staffing restructuring may be required.
 - Parents could be affected if any working patterns did not fit in with the days the nursery was open.
 - Utility costs would remain the same but alternative part-time use of the space could be made, e.g. Community use, although resources and furniture would need to either remain or be removed and then returned to accommodate this.
 5. Retain the nursery as it is - equivalent to 30 children at any one time.
 - The finances of the school would remain challenged, possibly taking funding away from the statutory aged classes and could lead to a budget deficit and possible redundancies.

The consultation begins on 7 September 2018 until 19 October 2018 and following analysis of the responses a report will be taken to the Executive Committee of the Council with recommendations of how to proceed. If the recommendation is to close the nursery class, permission would be requested to publish Statutory Notices for a period of 4 weeks.

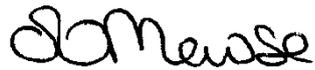
Any decision to close following analysis of responses to the Notices would need to be made by the Executive Committee of the Council subject to further recommendations.

Letters of consultation are also to be sent to all schools within the District, to parents of known Early Years children in the area, the Catholic and Church of England Diocese, the Muslim Association and other relevant bodies and Local Authorities.

Any comments or suggestions can be made on the response form which is included. This should be forwarded to Nina Mewse at the above address or alternatively emails may be sent to: educationconsultation@bradford.gov.uk quoting changes to Low Ash Primary School.

Online responses can be made on the Bradford Council [consultation website](#) under current consultations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nina Mewse". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'N'.

Nina Mewse
Senior Provision and Places Officer

Response form

Please complete details and return to:

Nina Mewse

**Senior Provision and Places Officer, Education Client Services,
1st Floor, Margaret McMillan Tower, Princes Way, Bradford BD1 1NN by 19 October 2018 at
the very latest**

Consultation on changes to nursery class provision at Low Ash Primary School.

Name (optional)

Full postcode (of your home address) *eg BD1 1NN*

Please indicate which of the following applies to you - *please tick all that apply*

- Parent/carer of child attending the nursery class
- Parent/carer of child attending the school
- Member of school staff
- School Governor at Low Ash Primary
- School Governor at another school
- Local Councillor
- Member of the Local Community
- Parent of a younger child, not yet attending a primary school or nursery
- Other

If other please give details

Please indicate your response to this consultation below – *please tick*

- I agree that the nursery class at Low Ash Primary School should be closed.
- The size of the nursery class should be reduced to 26 children at any one time and remain open with 2 members of staff.
- The opening hours of the nursery should be either mornings or afternoons only.
- The nursery should be open for 2 or 3 days a week instead of 5 days a week.
- I disagree with the proposals and feel that the nursery class should remain as it is.

PTO

Please add any further comments below

Please ensure that all comments are submitted by 19 October 2018 at the very latest.